

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claim 6 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and claims 1-5 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,178,275 (Nerses) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0016716 A1 (Mahonty), and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,468,972 (Yamada).

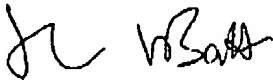
Claims 1-20 are pending in the Application. However, in the Office Action, only claims 1-7 have been considered. After receiving the Office Action, on or about June 25, 2004, Applicants' representative telephoned the Examiner. During this telephone interview, Applicants' representative pointed out that the Office Action did not consider all of the pending claims. The Examiner confirmed this, and stated that the Office Action would be withdrawn and a new Office Action issued. In a follow up telephone interview on or about July 26, 2004, the Examiner again indicated that he was currently working on a new Office Action and that the Office Action would be withdrawn. In still another telephone interview conducted on September 15, 2004, the Examiner indicated that a new Office Action would be completed by Monday, September 20, 2004 and that he would speak to his Supervisor. In a follow up telephone interview conducted on September 16, 2004, the Examiner indicated that he had completed a new Office Action, which was awaiting review by his Supervisor. Finally, on September 17, 2004, the Examiner telephoned Applicants' representative to inform him that the new Office Action has been counted. During all of these conversations, no exhibits were presented and the substance of the rejections was not discussed.

Applicants thank the Examiner for his efforts in withdrawing the Office Action. These remarks are being filed to make the several telephone interviews and Applicants' understanding

of the result of these interviews of record. To this extent, Applicants understand that the Office Action will be/has been withdrawn. As a result, Applicants respectfully submit that these remarks comprise a complete response to the Office Action. However, Applicants do not acquiesce in the correctness of the objections and rejections in the Office Action and reserve the right to address these objections and rejections should they be maintained after all pending claims have been considered by the Office.

Should the Examiner require anything further to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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